

PETERS
ENLARGEMENT
V P O N
THE PRAYERS OF
THE CHURCH.

The seventh Edition.

Whereunto is added certaine Queres and
Cases touching the Theoric and Practice of Prayer:
also Inducements and Incouragements to Per-
seuerance in that Dutie.

By Master HARRIS.

Robert Harris, D.D.
PSAL. 34. 17.

*The Righteous cry, and the Lord heareth and deliuereth them
out of all their troubles.*



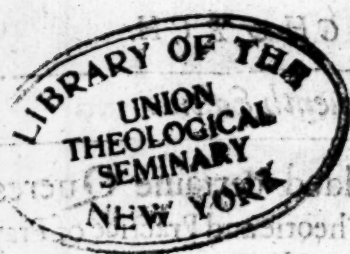
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THE RIGHT CONCERN, AND THE LORD HONORABLE AND DELIVERED FROM
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To the Reader.



His Sermon (thus made vp with mine owne and others notes) I now submit to Authoritie and Censure: for substance, I yeeld here is no more than what was deliuered; whether no lesse, I haue not now to say; for circumstance (I yeeld to the allegation) I acknowledge it seasonable. The times shall euer be cleared by praier whensoever they looke sadly vpon vs. Our Brethren abroad cry still in the Churches words; *The harvest is past,* ^{Ier. 8. 10.} *and the Summer is ended, and wee are not holpen;* and we (me thinkes) should adde with Ieremie, vers. 21. *I am sore vexed for the hurt of the daughter of my people, I am heavy, astonishment hath taken me; Is there no balme at Gilead, &c.* At home howsoever the Lord hath beene gracious to vs in the scarcitie, yet wee

The Epistle.

Hag 2.20.]

Psal. 65. 9,
19. 11.

Demonol. 1. 3.
c. 1. ad finem.

Dir W. Ral.
preface.

may in most places, take vp the Prophets words in another sense, *Is the seede yet in the Barne? as yet the Trees haue not bene deliuered of their burthen.* Looke into the 65. Psalme, and thou shalt finde, that it is the Lord that findes both ground and seede, that giues both growth and ripening to the Corne; and therefore wee should wait vpon him with our presents of praise and prayer. This were enough to make vs pray, but this is the least of many motives, for, Reader thou seest the times, the World is now all eare and tongue, the most giuen with the *Athenians* to little else than to heare and tell newes, (vncertaine newes, the Authour of all lies, as his Maiestie hath told vs) the rest are willing also to heare, and to heare Gods Truth, not Fables, and therein they doe but as Saint *Iames* would haue them, so as they would adde doing to hearing as hee commands. But alas, whilst we onely professe and discourse of Religion, we driue the practice of Religion out of the world, as one too iustly complaines. It is lamentable to consider the little vse that is made of Gods Ordinances,

To the Reader.

nances in most places; Preachers too often
(I tremble to speake it) bee vsed like post-
horses, spurred on till they be spent, & then a
fresh is called for, in the meane the world
sits still and thinkes to be saued for hearing.
Reader, mourne for this, weepe for this, for
this boads a Iudgement, the Lord will rec-
kon for the blood of his Prophets spent as
well as shed. To these reasons it will not be
hard for thee to adde more, looke within
thee, and round about thee, and so stirre vp
thy selfe to this exercise of Prayer, an ex-
ercise (I can assure thee) of vnspeakeable
strength and comfort, an exercise without
which thou canst not liue, and by which
thou maist liue in the mouth of death. Be-
leeue it, wert thou in an estate more de-
perate than death, in a place worse than
hell; yet if there thou couldest pray truly,
thou shouldest finde comfort and strength
beyond hope, for Prayer is better than our
hopes, and yet God is better to vs than our
prayer. First, for that which is publique, fol-
low him who was no time-seruer, make
no small account of publique prayers. Se-
condly, for priuate, pause before thou speak,

The Epistle

remember who spake it ; if a man would not deliuer an Oration to a Prince *ex tempore* and suddenly, it will not become vs to open our mouthes rashly before our Maker ; secondly, keepe touch with God ; first, for extraordinary and incidentall occasions, be sure to keepe thy selfe in such a state and condition of soule, as that euer thou canst recollect thy selfe, and call in all the powers of thy soule for this businesse vpon a short warning ; secondly, for ordinary times, so neere as may bee, faile not of thine houre. When the Clock strikes, the Scholler runnes to his booke, thou must to God, leauing all, therè tender thy selfe (though not alwayes alike fit) and so be in the way and place of preferment ; if words will not come, sigh, *God beares the sighing of his prisoners* ; if thou canst not sigh, breathe, God hath an care for that, *Lam. 3. 56*. Howeuér, therè bee, there stand, and the child that stands before his father, and appears in his place at supper-time with his trencher in his hand, speaks with his countenance, and speedes accordingly ; he was wise who said, They pray not altogether of fashion, who see their infirmity
in

To the Reader.

in praying, and are grieved for it; the worst prayers that wee make (to our owne sense I meane) speede euer best, and then wee pray most happily, when wee arise most humbled:

Thirdly, when thou hast prayed, doe not as children, who neuer looke after their arrow; but as *David*, cap. 9. 1. take notice of thine enlargements in prayer, and of thy successe after, write downe time and place as the Prophet doth, and so helpe thy selfe in future times by former experiments. I see this Porch growes wide, and therefore I will conclude. If thou be acquainted with prayer, thou knowest there is more in it than can bee expressed; if thou bee not acquainted, grow acquainted, and thou shalt finde me true. If thou wantest further motives and directions, I commend (in this haste) to thee, who art but a poore English private man; First, for the promises (whereof the heart must chew before prayer) the *Treatise of faith*. Secondly, for motives, the *Epistle to the key of Heauen*. Thirdly, for cases of Conscience, and directions after prayer, 2. Treatises on Eph. 6. viz, The spiritual Armour,
and

The Epistle

and now after directions and exhortations,
what remaines but practice? instead of o-
thers pratling & enterdealing in State-busi-
nesse, doe thou pray, pray for thy Soueraign,
for his seed, for the Churches, for thy selfe,
for thy charge, and vse no more words a-
gainst mens sins, than thou wilt make pray-
ers for their soules in secret, if thou wilt
haue comfort in thy words. Thus much of
this: Now Reader to thee; if these plaine
notes passe the Presse, know that I neither
did intend their publishing before I Prea-
ched them, nor can intend notwithstanding
their refining since; If the world may
bee bettered by them, or by any thing I can
doe, I haue enough, only I desire mercie and
equity from my friends: those notes of
mine which they haue, I will my selfe (after
my publike Ministerie) now shortly reuise;
let no man doe so ill an office as to thrust
out other mens notes without their priui-
ty, especially his, who can doe nothing wor-
thy this Age.

R O. HARRIS.

P E T E R S
E N L A R G E M E N T.

A C T S 12. 6, 7.

And when Herod would haue brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping betweene two souldiers, bound with two chaines; and the Keepers before the doore, kept the prison.

And behold, the Angell of the Lord came vpon him; and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him vp, saying; Arise, vp quickly: And his chaines fell off from his hands, &c.



HERE is a story of Peters
1. Imprisonment. 2. En-
largment: with the cause
of the one, and meanes of
the other. Herod hauing
vexed some, slaine a se-
cond, now commits
the third; and all this to
gratifie the Iewes. Peter
thus committed, is bailed by the Church, or rather
remoued and freed by petition: they pray hartily
for

for him, in the 5. verse, and they speed as happily, whilest they are praying, God giues in the prisoner amongst them. The manner of his deliuey is here reported, and that was very strange, beyond *Herods* purpose, the prisoners expectation, the Keepers meaning, all mens hopes : *Herod* held his purpose he had begun, and the next morning hee meant an end of him. *Peter* had made his conclusion, to morrow (thinks he) (for messages past betweene him and the Church, which spent this night in prayer for him, and therefore knew the danger) I must be put to it, therefore I will strengthen my selfe to night : The Keepers stood vpon their guard, and resolu'd that no *Peter* should passe them: yet is *Peter* deliuered ; and how I pray you ? God remoues all impediments, for nothing was in readinesse.

First, for man, entrance was there none, therefore God sends an Angell, and there was no stop against him.

Next, in the darke it was hard to find which was which; God directs an Angel to him, and he comes vpon him, and misses not the man, though bound to the same chaine with two others, as in strict imprisonment they vied to doe.

Thirdly, they were in the darke, and that was ill for noyse ; The Angell brings his darke lanthorne with him, and shines to *Peter* and none else.

Fourthly, the prisoner can doe little for himselfe : he is asleepe, the Angell wakes him ; hee is laid, the Angell raises him : he is amazed, the Angell directs him ; he is bound, the Angell unties him ; hee knowes not where he is, the Angell guides him ; hee

Peters Enlargement

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is to passe thorow fundry *difficulties*, the Angell conducts him thorow them all, and so dismisses him.

We will vse no more words about a plaine Story, but acquaint you with our meditations: they containe the successe of the Churches prayers; *they prayed for Peter*, the Angell thereupon is sent to *Peter*: where see, 1. *How the Angell finds him*: 2. *How the Angell deliuers him*.

For the first, hee finds him *sleeping*, in the midst of feares and foes: From whence was this sleepe? was it worldly sorrow that caused it, or was it carnall security?

Ans. In doubtfull things, charity supposes the best, so should wee: worldly sorrow causes sleepe, but how? when it is not extreme, and that sleepe is ioyned with starting; carnall security will cause sleep: but why should we charge *Peter* with that at this time? his sleepe came from a better cause, he was at peace with God, he had the Churches prayers for him, the cause for him, his conscience for him, God and his Angels for him; hee could dye but once, and for one death hee was prepared: hence his boldnesse before, Chapters 4. & 5. hence his confidence, here he resolved with *David*, *I will lay mee downe and sleepe*, and withall, God gaue rest to his beloued, as it is in the *psalmes*, rest more than ordinary to his minde, to his body: hence the Angell can hardly awake him, and being awaked, he is not terrified as a guilty person would haue been in this case: Doe then but consider, 1. The man. 2. His behauiour in like cases. 3. The time and

circumstances. 4. The exercises of the Church for him. 5. The messenger, and message sent to him. 6. The manner of his behauiour when he is awaked, and you will see that his sleepe grew not from distemper, but from strength of faith and comfort. Now to the points.

Doff. 1.

Esay 55.

Iam. 5.

Where first, from the order, see the power of ioynt prayers; they beare downe all before them, and preuaile in heauen and earth; as the Word that comes from heauen, prospers in the thing whereunto it is sent: so the word that goes to heauen, the prayers of the Church, strike vp to God, there they lye at his gates, and neuer will away without their errand; and when they are answered, then they come downe with authority, and raigne ouer all impediments below; **Witnesse this Story: Peter** is committed, the persecuters are resolute, the foes many, the friends few, meanes none but God, to God the Church goes; the enemies plot, the Church prayes; they shut the prison doores, the Church opens heauens doores; so there's old rugging for the prisoner, but the Church winnes him. God, to let them see what prayers be, sends him to them while they are praying; there, saith God, (if you will take no denial) there he is; thereby pointing vs to the meanes of his deliuerance: we neede not many words for prooffe of this: *Iames* saith, *The prayer of one righteous man preuailes much*: if of one, what of twenty? what of an hundred? and he instances in *Elijah*, *Hee alone could open and shut heauen*; then well may many open and shut prisons on earth: nay, adde further, the ioynt prayers of

vnbeleeuers and hypocrites haue done much; when
heathenish *Nimue* fasted and prayed, God heard; *Jonah 3.*
when false *Rehoboam* humbled himselfe and his people, God was intreated; how much more shall the
faithfull prayers of the Church preuaile? preuaile (I
say) both for the preuenting and remouing euils,
and obtaining and keeping of good things: What
shall we instance the life of *Asa*, *Iehosaphat*, *Heze-
kiab*? when was it otherwise? when did the Church
of God euer ioyne in a common petition to God,
but they sped? no instance to the contrary.

No maruell, this exercise is well grounded and warranted, it hath the warrant of a precept: 1. *Pray* *Reas. 1.*
for one another: call vpon me. *James 5.*

2. The warrant of a promise, *I will deliuer thee.* *Psal. 50.*

3. The warrant of experience, neuer any yet v-
fed it, but they preuailed.

Prayers are presents very welcome to God, hee
prefers them to all sacrifices, being immediat wor-
ships of his Maiesty; Let me heare thy voyce, it is
pleasant: No father loues the voice of his children,
like as God loues the voice of his Church; 'Tis his
musicke and perfume, Ren. 5:8. *Cant. 2. 14.*

3. The parties are very deare who tender them; *Reas. 3.*
God loues his Church aboue all creatures, he gaue
his Sonne for her, and therefore her sutes shall
haue acceptance: *Let me see thy face, it's comely. E-* *Cant. 2. 14.*
sther neuer pleased *Abasuerosh* so well, as the Church
pleaseth Christ.

4. The parties from and through whom they
are presented, please: they are indited and abbet-
ted by the holy Ghost, *Rom 8.* tendred by Christ *Rom 8.*

Iesus, and shall these be denyed? Adde to this,

5. The party to whom they are directed, to God; who is all truth, mercy, grace, wisdom, power, and shall not these preuaile? Prayers set God on worke, and all in God, his wisdom, his power, his Angels, and what then can hinder?

Use 1.

Looke backward, and call to minde your sinne this day, see, many a *Peter* hath beene in prison, and prayers were not made by the Church; many a member sicke, and prayes were not made by the Elders; yea, many a Church distressed, *Bohemia* afflicted, the *Palatinate* and *Valtoline* distressed, yet we did not pray; the enemy could curse, but wee did not pray. and therefore how iustly might God distresse and leaue vs destitute of his helpe, and the Churches prayers?

2. Looke forward, and preserve and improve this your interest in God, let no *Peter*, no Preacher, no Christian, no neighbour lye in the chaines by you, (whether in the chaines of sicknesse, or povertry, or debt, or paine, or sinne, or temptation) but doe you reprive him: you have a key that will open any locke, a medicine that will heale any wound, a weapon that will preuaile in any place; draw this weapon, use this medicine: if men bee sicke, pray them whole; if poore, pray them rich; if sad, pray them merry.

But is this so easily done? yes verily by the whole Church; as it is for the outward estate when one is very poore, it is hard for two or three to set him vp againe; but nothing for a thousand; and when one is in a pit, it is much for one, but not for many

many to pull him out: see here, it is long of vs that men lye so long vnder their burthens: would wee ioyntly commend them to God; our prayers would take, mens chaines would off, true spiritual chains, Why, if so, were it not worth the while? What, *Obiect.* may we ease our brethren of temptations, of passions, of lusts, and will we not? But for outward crosses, saith not Saint *Iames*, let the prayers of the Church heale the sicke? Saith not the Story, the prayers of the Church procured *Peters* liberty? But *Obiect.* say they be not alwayes deliuered; yet it is good to get the crosses mitigated, sanctified, sweetned, and something will be done if we pray; Doe this then or nothing. Perhaps you will excuse other negligences: you would visit your sicke neighbour, but you question his disease; your welcome; you would releue your poore neighbours, but you haue it not; why there is no Christian man but he hath an interest in God, a spirit of prayer; lift vp a prayer for thy brethren, if thou canst doe nothing else, and this will doe thee and him good: prayer in this case for others, is a cleerer euidence of grace, than for our selues. *Ans.*

Here is comfort and encouragement; comfort for our selues, if members of the Church, if wee bleed with her, if wee pray for her, if we say, *If I forget thee, O Ierusalem, then let my right hand forget her cunning*: the comfort is great; wee haue that which Saint *Paul* thirsted for, the prayers of the Church; And this is a priuilege worth ten worlds, and a comfort beyond all apprehension, when a man lookes round about him and can say, there is a towne;

a towne, I haue some prayers there, there is another, I haue stocke going there, nay, in euery Shire, euery Nation, some that be enlarged when I am barren, some quickned when I am dull, and I am an aduenturer in the Churches ship, I haue a stocke in her treasure, and an interest in her prayers; this keepe the head aboue water, and preserues from sinking.

4. For encouragement, to pray for the Church: would Gods people enter into a holy league, and tye themselues in their seuerall closets, to spend so much time weekly, or daily in prayer, for some particular person, or place, Church or Nation; I wonder how they should misse. Tell me where euer the Churches ioynt prayers did euer mis-carry, or proue abortiue; in what place, in what case, for what people? Prayers haue beene made for men out of the Church, and haue sped, witnesse *Ninuié*; for men in the Church (good men, bad men) and haue sped; prayers haue beene made by Land, and haue preuailed; on the Seas by *Ionah*, and haue sped, they haue preuailed vnder the earth, in dens, and dungeons, and caues; prayers haue beene made for sicke men, and haue holpe them; for dying men, for poore men, for captiues, for prisoners, &c haue holpen; for men against persecution, against temptation, against sorrow, against beasts, against men; against diuels: prayers haue been omnipotent heretofore, why not now?

Obiect.

Ob. Why now, if we were as others, Gods hand (we know) is not shortened, his eare not heauy; but our sinnes, our crying ripe sins, hinder good things from vs.

Ans.

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Ans. Why therefore set against those finnes by prayer, cast out your owne, cry downe other mens, out-cry them. *Ans.*

Ob. Oh but they cry loud.

Obiect.

Ans. Yet prayer hath the stronger voyce, the bloud of Christ speakes better things than bloudy finnes, &c. Let *Sodom* yeeld ten holy men, and shee shall be spared; let one *Elijah* stand vp for stiffe-necked *Israell*, and one *Amos* plead for rebellious *Iudah*, and God will shew mercy. *Ans.*

Gen. 18.
Iam. 5.
Amos 7. 13.

Ob. True indeed, if we had such as they, but our prayers are weake and faint. *Obiect.*

Ans. 1. They were men subiect to like passions. *Ans.*

2. The prayer of the righteous is preuailing. *Iam. 5. 16, 17.*

3. These here mentioned were new conuerts, yet preuailed with God for *Peter*.

Ob. Oh but here the whole Church ioyned: if all *Israel* might meet from *Dan* to *Beersheba*, there might be some hope. *Obiect.*

Ans. We may, and doe more than these might;

1. We may meet in publike assemblies euery Sabbath: 2. These were but few that liued in the dark, and met in the night, and in *Hesters* time in their feuerall families, and the whole State was then against the truth, and against the Scriptures, and all Religion was disgraced, yet then they preuailed, much more we now. *Ans.*

Ob. But now it is too late, many Churches are broad be quite scattered, many men at home haue their backs and hearts quite broken, with wants, temptations, discouragements. *Obiect.*

Ans. Whilest God calls in his word, it is not too late, *Ans.*

late, God is vsed to see men sinking before hee sets in; their extremity is his opportunity: when *Peter* is within one night of the sword, then is his time.

Obiect.

Ans.

Ob. But I haue waited, and see no successe.

Gen. 22.

Ans. So did the Church, they pray for *Peter* this weeke, the next, and the next, the doores bee still shut, the chains be still on; well, now they haue but one night more to wait, they wait that; but ere morning all is wonne. If then we haue but one day, one night, one houre to spend; hope, pray, wait; that day, that night, that houre, God will be seene in the Mount: deliuerance shall come, if prayer go on the errand; it euer was so, euer shall be so, dispute not, but beleue: there is who prayes, & speaks not, and there is too that speakes, who prayes nor; if thou wilt pray, thou must open thy needs to God, as thy Father, through Christ, God-man, as thy Mediatour, from God the holy Ghost; as the inditer of thy prayers: if thou wilt pray, thy heart must be 1. emptied of purposes of sinne: 2. broken: 3. purged from guile by faith; which faith must then worke; before thou beginnest, say with *Dauid*, *I will call, and God will answer me*; and when thou hast done, conclude, I haue spoken, and shall in due time and manner be answered; thus doe, and be sure that thou neither beginne nor end a lawful petition (of such onely we speake) before thou art aware, let faith enter thy sure, and end, & subscribe it, and thou preuailest.

Psal. 66. 18.

Psal. 86. 7.

And the 56. 9.

Now to particulars.

How finds the Angell Peter? Sure he cannot sleepe this night, being vpon his life to morrow, and in all like-

likelihood knowing of it by the Church; how soeuer, not sure of life one day to an end, but like enough to be sent for at an houres warning; as *Iohn Baptists* head was. Notwithstanding all this, *Peter* sleeps as soundly as euer in his life, and wakes without terror; whence was this? from corruption? no; from naturall courage? no; when *Peter* was younger, and therefore naturally bolder, he was a distard: whence then? consider the reasons before, and it will be found, that it was from speciall comfort and confidence in God; which comfort most attends prisons and persecutions: here see the strength of spirituall peace and comfort.

The Lord hath comforts for his children, that will quiet and support them in any feares and straits: his consolations will make a man sleepe without a bed; liue almost without a soule: They will make one bold in danger, quiet in trouble, liue in the iawes of death: *The ioy of the Lord is strong*, saith *Nehemiah*, strong indeed, that will carry a man ouer all: *Peter* had a strong heart, that can thus sleepe, thus wake, that can looke vpon Chains, vpon Prisons, vpon Tyrants, vpon Torments, vpon Angels; (good and bad) and neuer breake his sleepe for the matter. *Pauls* ioyes were strong, that made him sing in the stocks: *Dauids* faith strong, that made him say, *I will lye downe and sleepe, I will not feare though ten thousand rise up against mee*: those were strong and strange ioyes that supported *Dauid* in all his feares, and made him say, *In the multitude of my thoughts, thy comforts glad my soule*; those strong that triumphed ouer rackings, mockings,

Doct. 2.

Nehem. 8.

Acts 16.

Psal. 3.

Psal. 94. 19.

scourgings, &c. as in the eleuenth to the Hebrewes.

1. Q. Whence
these comforts
Ans. 1.

Quest. But whence comes their strength?

Because they be Gods ioyes, the ioyes of the Spirit, deriued immediatly from the fountaine; and things be purest and strongest there.

2. Because spirituall; for as spirits are more actiue and powerfull than bodies, so spiritual things than bodily and naturall.

3. These ioyes are most certaine and durable, these ouercome and out-liue all crosses, and all other comforts.

4. They are all-sufficient, and borrow no helpe from creatures: Nature and Art worke with instruments, and by meanes; they cannot support without meat, strengthen without sleepe, giue sleepe without warmth, nor warmth without a bed, &c. But God can, beyond means, without means, work comfort, make one see in the darke, liue in death.

and against means
to

Q. What.
Ans. 1.

Quest. But what be these comforts of God?

Ans. Precibus promises, applyed by God in due season, and brought home to the heart, which reuiue the spirits more than any balm; and these promises come thicke vpon Peter now. Hee thinketh, hath not God said, that *the sighing of prisoners comes to him*? that *he bottles up all our teares*? that *we should cast our care vpon him, and he will care for vs*? that *in six and seuen troubles, they shall not come neere mee*? that *in fire and water he will be with mee*? and did not I heare my Sauour say, *Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousnesse sake*? reade not I how *Dauid* said, *I will lye downe and sleepe*? and therefore I will doe so too.

2. Streng-

2. Strengthening graces, God powres the spirit of faith, patience, power, courage, into his, in duetime; and they raise the heart, as wine the fainting spirits; every saving grace is healing, is strengthening.

3. Hourely experience of Gods care and providence; and a childe neuer sees the loue of his mother so much as when hee is sicke; so Gods children, &c.

Now that makes them plucke vp their feet with *Jacob*, and say with *Paul*, *I know whom I haue trusted;* and with the Church, *Thou wilt guide us to death;* and after (as *David* addes) *receiue to glory.*

4. Speciall peace of conscience and ioy of the holy Ghost, by new expressions of Gods fauour, and rauishments of heaven: then God opens heauen, and they see their life and crowne; and so are carried ouer all.

Quest. When doth God thus comfort his?

3. Q. When.

Ans. When they most need it, as then the mother brings out her preferues, when the childe is sicke: first, when they bee most humbled and empty of themselves; therefore after greatest humiliations come greatest consolations, as *David*, *Abraham*; and others euer found.

2. But specially in the day of triall and persecution, the more the Diuell bestirres him, the more God bestirs him: thus the sweetest nights that euer *Jacob* spent were in the field, and so for *Peter*; and when had *David* those large affections to rise at midnight, when was the Word so sweet, but when his troubles were bitter?

Gen. 18. and
31. chap.
Psal. 119.

The Use is double, 1. Get these comforts, we get

Use.

aqua vita ready against qualms; Bezoar-stone, and cordials against fits; but the cordials that helpe all, is the holy Ghost, the Comforter; Art is blind, and often posed; Nature weake, and often foiled; (like a bow that must not be drawne beyond compasse) only grace and spirituall comfort is inuincible: get this, and you may sleepe in a dungeon, liue in the darke, want all, and yet haue all; want these, and a flea may breake your sleepe, and a hand-writing dash your mirth in the midst of all friends.

Dan. 5.

2. Let such as haue spirituall hearts thus affected, stay themselves here; feare not pouerty, there be comforts beyond the paine of famine; feare not sicknesse, there be comforts beyond all fits of sicknesse: feare not death, feare not chaines, feare not any thing that you can or shall suffer: Not any thing; Why, a man is subiect to racking, to burning, &c. yet feare not, and why? the Lord hath comfort in all, and aboue all tribulations. When he calls a *Saul* to a crowne, he makes him another man: so when he calls a man to a chaine, *Peter* is not the man in prison, he was out of prison; at the first he was fearefull of a wenches word, after he was willing, yet flesh hung backe, *Iohn* the last Chapter, Verse 18. But when put vpon it, heare his voice, see his face; he can be as quiet, as comfortable, as well in prison as euer.

Reuel. 2. 16,

1 Cor. 6. 1

Act. 5. 29. 4. 13

Obiect.

Ans.

Obiect.

Ans.

Ob. Oh but I finde my selfe afraid of words.

Ans. So was *Peter* at first.

Ob. Oh but, saith our Sauour, beware of men,

Ans. No man so malicious as God is mercifull, so perillous as God is pittifull. Oh but say we liued where

where we should lye in cold irons, in the darke, be halfe pined, starued; who can beare these? Peter can, any can, when God calls them to it.

O but say we were put to the fiery triall, flames are intolerable and mercilesse. Oh but flames are in Gods hands, *Daniel 3*. Chapter: Againe, Martyrs haue had more comfort there, than in all their liues before. Oh but some of them haue cried out of paines: And doe not men so who dye in their beds too? but God hath borne them through these, and made them amends.

O get then inward strength, and that will ouercome all feares, all torments; conclude wee with that good Martyr, If God call euery any of his to any such sufferings, hee will either weaken the flame, or strengthen their faith; he hath promised (that, which let vs liue and dye in; to wit) that he will not tempt beyond strength: *And hee is able to* 2 Cor. 10. *doe exceeding abundantly above all that wee can speake or thinke.*

Assure your selues, the feare of persecution is more than persecution it selfe; therefore I speake to your feares, for there is none (through Gods mercy) with vs, I am sure, to bee felt (I thinke) to be feared.

Scare

The same night, &c. That the Lord doth often *Doct. 3.* hold his people long in suspence, for those things which he meanes to giue them; hee is to our seeming slow, but sure; sure, but slow: thus hee was as good as his word to *Abraham*, hee gaue him a sonne, but hee held him off to the last houre; hee kept touch with his posterity, brought them out of

Egypt,

Egypt, but he deferred it till the last day; his bond was almost forfeited, yet he paid it before the Sun set, *Exod. 12. 17. 41.* Thus *Ioseph* was long in prison, yet at the appointed time brought forth; and *Israel* long in captivity, prayers were made, and yet *Daniel* could heare no answer till night was vpon him; *Iacob* wrestles till day, &c. so also the woman of Canaan, *Matth. 15.* and the Church here: in all which places we see, that God is mindefull of his day. 2. That hee deferres sometime till the last houre be running.

7 Reas.

The reason of this delay is manifold. 1. God would turne our eyes backward, and make vs say, O it is iust God should deferre me: I haue deferred him; he called and I would not heare; prayed me againe, againe, and againe, and I would not answer; therefore it is equall I should call and cry, and not be heard.

2. God hereby would sharpen our prayers for the present; therefore he seemes deafe, because we should speake out; therefore slow, because wee should be earnest. Thus *Daniel* interprets it: God deferres him, that is (saith he) but to try me, therefore he spits vpon his hands, and takes better hold; O Lord forgiue, saith he, O Lord heare, O Lord open, and powres so many petitions and arguments vpon God, that there is no resistance. Thus *Iacob*, hee sees the day comming vpon him, and he had made nothing of it all night, and therefore now he sets to it, *Goe!* saith he, *I will not let thee goe without a blessing.*

3. Hereby hee prepares vs for the future receiving

ting of his comforts; thus he humbles vs, thus hee enlargeth vs, thus fits vs for thankfulness, the more blessings cost vs, the better we will prize them, and praise God for them: adde to this, that these repulses driue vs to further searches, as the Israelites at ^{Ios. 7.} ^{Judg. 20.}
ai, and Gibeah.

Doth the Lord thus long deferre sometime his intended comforts and answers? Let vs know the courses of his prouidence, and wayt vpon him: behold the husbandman wayts; when he hath sowne his seed, he doth not looke to reape and sow all in a day, his Corne is first buried, yea, it dyes; yea, it growes downward, before it comes vpward, and when it is vp, receiues many a snib and checke, yet he wayts; And why? because he hath experience: so must wee, when we haue sowne our seed; say we bury our prayers, say to our seeming they dye, say they grow downward, backward, say all things seeme to be worse after praier with vs than before, yet wayt; why? wee haue experience of our owne and other mens successe: neuer did men sow this seed, but they had a crop, though a late harvest, yet a harvest.

Oh. Oh but I haue prayed exceeding long.

Ans. How long? *Isaak* prayed twenty yeares for a child, before he sped; *Abraham* thirty, before he sped; *Abraham's* posterity were foure hundred yeares in captiuitie, before they were deliuered; the Church thirsted for *Christ*, one thousand, two thousand, three thousand yeares, before they had him: How many thousands, hundreds, score of yceres hast thou wayted?

Obiect.

Ans.

Obiect.

Ob. O but I haue tryed all my friends, vsed all meanes, prayed my selfe, and got others to speake too, and yet no helpe.

Answ.

Ans. And might not *Peter* say as much? not a Christian in *Ierusalem*, but had spoken and spoken often, and yet he stickes.

Obiect.

Ob. O but matters with me are worse and worse, the more I pray against pouerty, the poorer I am; the more I pray for patience, the worse I am; the more I pray for faith, the lesse I haue; the more I pray against passions and temptations, the more they flye in my face.

Answ.

Ans. Is not this, as wee said, that the corne must goe backward, before it come forward? was it not so with *Abraham* and *Sarah*, the longer they prayed, the elder they waxed, and so vnfit for issue?

Obiect.

Ob. O but my sinnes grow stronger by prayer.

Answ.

Ans. Not so, thou feelest it more than before; it is not because sinne is stronger, but thou sounder. Againe, these motions of sinne, be not motions of life, but symptoms of death; as the fowle struggles, and sprunts most when the head is off: the pangs of death be now vpon thy lufs, take comfort.

Obiect.

Ob. O but now your comforts come too late, the date is out for me.

Answ.

Ans. Why? hath *God* said, pray no more, as to *Jeremy*; hath he stopt thy mouth? so long as *God* saith, pray; so long as the spirit within thee saith, pray; so long as *Gods* people haue hearts to pray, neuer say it is too late to pray: if *Peter* be out by midnight, or by day-break, it is as well as if he had beene out a moneth before.

Obiect.

Ob. O but delayes breake the heart.

Obiect.

Ans. But note the end of delayes, they are neuer to deny or frustrate, but to fit, and to quicken: make these vses of delayes, and then if thy sure bee not honest, neuer begin it; if it be, neuer leaue it: learne of husbandmen, when they pull downe a tree, or lift at some blocke, if they cannot stirre it, they call in helpe, if it come not at the first pull, they pull againe, if not then, ha, againe, if not then, ha, once more; at last they feele it comming, and then it comes amaine: learne of *Elijah*; hee prayed for rayne; having prayed, lookes about him, nothing comes; hee prayed againe; nothing comes; hee prayed againe, nothing comes; at length, O Master (saith his seruant) I see a cloud, but it is but little? Is it a cloud? then once more to it, and by and by the heauens were masked with clouds: learne of these men; *Peter* stickes in the dungeon, one lifts, he cannot stirre him; try you (saith he) to a second, to a third, try a fourth, a fift; at length heauen stirres, the chaynes stirre, and *Peter* comes in amongst them: learne of Christ himselfe; the *Widow* dealt with a Iudge, not a Father; a bad Iudge, she was alone, a simple Orator, yet she preuailes: learne of beggers; they haue no command, no promise, no acquaintance, no Art; and yet will stand it out: the master chides, the begger stands it out, the dame chides, hee stands still; the seruants come, and say, they dare not serue him; the children say wee must not, and yet he will not away. O Lord, helpe our faith, how weake be wee, if hauing precept, promise, kindred, Gods seruants,

1 King. 18. 13.

Luke 6.

Gods Sonne on our sides, we will be put off with a delay? well (as I said) so long as a night, an houre, a minute is left, pray; one night may compass that which an hundred before could not.

It followeth, *An Angell, &c.*

DoH. 4.

3 Pet. 2.

Rea. 1.

Esay 4. 5.

The Lord hath ever meanes at hand for his seruants comfort and deliuerance, if set on worke: well might Peter say, *The Lord knoweth how to deliuer his*, &c. He is neuer at a stand, if they know how to pray, he knoweth how to comfort.

In himselfe he is al-sufficient, infinite in wisdom to inuent meanes; in power, to act them; and if need be, to create more.

2. He is the Lord of Hosts, the Lord of every creature; if our works lye in the Seas, hee is Lord of the Seas; if on the Land, hee is Lord there; if in Prison, he beareth the keyes of every Goale; if heauens can help vs, he commands them; if winds, if beasts, if friends, if strangers, if foes, if Angels, the Lord hath the command of all persons, things, and places.

Ysa. 1.

Plal. 7.

For comfort, roule thy selfe vpon God, cast thy care vpon him, he will bring it to passe; Is thy burthen pouerty? cast it vpon him, and hee will helpe it; is it sinne, feare, sorrow? whatsoeuer it be, hee can beare it, and discharge thee.

This Sermon
was made in
the depth of
the dearth.

Oh but I see no meanes, I owe so much, so many in my family, and no meanes.

This is as if they should haue said, If we had a friend in the Court, to moue *Hered*; if a friend in the Watch, to bribe him; if in the Prison, to see him; then something might be done, but now all meanes

meanes faile vs. No, no: God hath meanes beyond our sight; if men cannot doe it, Angels can and shall: and if no man will pay the Widowes debt, God will: if no body else will feed *Eliab*, the Ra. 2 King. 4. uens shall: what doe we talke of meanes? all means are shut vs in God.

Ob. Oh but my case is desperate, it is not possible to helpe me.

Ans. Now wee shall haue a tale of impossibilities: And why not possible? shall any thing be impossible to God?

Ob. Oh but there be an hundred blockes in my way.

Ans. But what is in his way, that makes his way thorow the seas, stones, wood, yron, &c? goe to the prison, there is a blocke, a guard; passe that guard, there is a blocke, a doore; passe the doore, there is another, a chayne; passe the chayne, there is another, an yron gate. O but what of this? if they can breake thorow all hinderances of ynbeleefe, discouragements, to prayer; God will breake thorow these and a thousand more, to their comfort. O but God workes no wonders now. No? his Name is wonderfull still, his power as great as euer, his wisdom as deepe as euer, his promises as good, his loue as much to his as euer, our need as much, our interest as good, our Saviour as good; all things stand as before: if wee can vse former meanes, wee shall finde former successe, and God will doe abundantly aboue all that we can speake or thinke: wee haue the Lords promise for this, *Ephesians* 3. 20. and *Esay* 42. 16. *I will make darke*

Ans.
Zach. 8. 6.

Ans.
Esay 43. 16.

Marke our Sa-
uiours colle-
ction from
Mannato
bread.
Matth. 4.
Deut. 8. 3.
Esay 9. 6.

light, and crookednesse straigh: wee haue had our own experience; let any man that hath had any acquaintance with God and this holy duty, tell mee when prayers were not successfull; when diddest thou euer speake to thy heavenly Father, but he did answer thee with some ease, some comfort? When diddest thou euer pray, but thy heart was thereby somewhat lightened? and if thou canst not but say with *David*, in the same day I asked, I was thus far answered, *That my heart was strengthened. psal. 139. 3.* doe not sayle to conclude with *David*, *Though I walke in the midst of troubles, yet (vpon prayer) I shall be receiued, 7, and God will perfect his mercies in me for euer, 8.*

Thus wee haue dispatcht some meditations: more wee haue, but they must be onely named; as 1. *Herod* would, but could not bring forth *Peter* to tryall and execution: men be but men, and must doe as they may; for what they would doe against the Church, nor they, nor all the Diuels in Hell can doe.

2. The Lord can giue sleepe and peace in any place, at any time, in any company.

3. Gods best seruants and messengers, are sometimes yoked with vilest offenders, &c.

4. Gods best creatures are the Churches seruants: Angels.

5. Lastly, the Lord can quickly shake his out of their chaynes, rags, seares, fetters, &c. But what do I meane thus to exceed; Brethren, I would faine haue you more thirsty of your time; doe you not waste it (as others doe) in idle impertinences, much

much lesse in surueying States and Kingdomes.
It is not for vs to sit vpon Crownes and Thrones,
and to turne Statesmen; it is for vs to be thanke-
full where God blesses, and to be prayerfull when
the Church labours: to this end I haue said thus
much; to perswade you to the practise of what
you know, now your turne followes, lets see
what will be done, and how well you will
improue time, in speaking to God,
rather than to, or of
men.

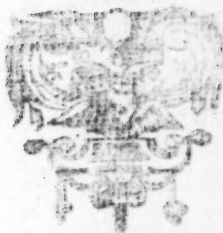
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 and to rule States; it is for us to be thank-
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 men.

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Certaine Queres and Cases tou-
ching the Theory and Practice
of PRAYER.



His plaine Sermon hath
not been oftner printed,
than I haue been impor-
tuned to enlarge it. In-
treaties haue won so far
vpon me, as that I am cō-
tent to adde two things:
1. Certaine Queres and
cases touching the Theo-
ry & practice of Prayer:

2. Some inuitements and encouragements to per-
seuerance in this duty. In both expect brieuenesse
and plainenesse; that so the Porch may suite with
the House.

QUESTIONS.

The first Question then shall be, what Pray-
er is? Whereunto *S. Pauls* answer is, That it
is a making knowne our desires to God, *Phil. 4. 6.*
first,

explic. 2. de.

In Phil. 4.

first, the will takes fire & desires: 2 the man brings and opens these desires to God; and the desire thus flaming & blazing vpward, is properly prayer: this desire is expressed sundry wayes, either by an inward or outward word, as the Glosse speaks; sometimes the minde speaks inwardly; as in *Hannah* and *Moses*, and thats (mostly) the strongest voyce of all; sometimes the tongue vtters what the heart indites, *Psal. 45.* sometimes speech failes, a man can but chatter, not speake, with *Heczekiah*, haply not so much, as *Ps. 77.* yet then he speaks most (like a buffing man) when he speaks least, his eyes, hands, face, teares speake, every inward sigh, and outward member is a tongue. Now, the desire vented any of these wayes, is a prayer; if the first way, tis called a mentall prayer; if the second, a vocall; if the third, a reall. As for *Bellarmines* intellectuall prayer in his crosse-sense, we leaue it to himselfe.

The second question is; What be the kindes of Prayer? *Ans.* A man prayes either for himselfe, or for others: and when for himselfe, either for the auersion of euill, or obtainement of good; that they call deprecation, this apprecation, as that for others supplication: whereto some adde thanksgiuing, vouching for all, *1 Tim. 2. 1.* Wee onely say three things; first, that howeuer thanksgiuing enuolue desire of acceptance, yet it is not formally prayer. Secondly, that prayer may admit the diuision giuen; but thirdly, whether the Apostles words in the originall, or his scope (perswading Prayers for others) in that place will

will beare out the distinction, I suspend.

The third question touches vpon certaine requisites in prayer, whereof some are more, some lesse intrinsicall and inward : as first, touching the matter of prayer, where persons and things come to be considered. For things, we lay downe two things for haste; first, that euery thing will no more beare a prayer, than euery streame will a Ship; secondly, the thing asked must first bee warranted vnder some precept or promise in generall, though not expressly; secondly, must bee of some importance, either in it selfe, or by circumstance. A man must not sue for a Licence to breake his Soueraignes Lawes, nor come to his Prince to begge a pinne or a point. Vnlesse circumstance make it either duty or necessity, it is not prayer: it is presumption that we heare from some mouthes, God send I may winne this cast, this game, and the like.

2. For persons, this shall suffice; first, the person prayed vnto, must be the Lord. Prayer is an homage onely due to him, hee claimes it with other his prerogatiues, *Psal.* 51. 15. and the Church acknowledges it, *Psal.* 65. 2. A precept and promise we haue from him for the supporting of our faith whence prayer must flow. If any can shew either from any other, let him make his vse thereof. But touching this poynt of praying to creatures, no more but this, first, howeuer the doctrine seemes at first blush to haue as much countenance from men as any poynt controuerted and

waued betweene vs and Rome : yet secondly, it hath as little shew of any footing in the Scripture as what hath least : the very truth is, nothing is brought but what seemes ridiculous to such Iesuites as are versed in the Text. For vs, wee are taught to giue lowest homage to highest Maiestie, and to tender diuine prayers to none lesse than a God.

2. For the party praying, thus : first, euery one should be acquainted with this duty ; for it is a seruice due to the chiefe Lord, from all that hold any thing of him : secondly, all Gods growne children are acquainted with it ; for hee hath no dumbe children. They all receiue the Spirit of prayers, and in their owne language doe call him Abba, or Father. Thirdly, whosoeuer will pray acceptably and confidently, must be qualified, for person and graces. For person ; hee must not be a sinner, 1. in the trade, state, and bondage of sinne. God heares none such : hee must be righteous, vpright, for to such the promise is made, *Rom. 8. 15.*

2. For Graces ; his vnderstanding and affections must bee qualified : 1. in the vnderstanding part there must be these graces ; first, knowledge, without which, the minde cannot bee good, *Prou. 19.* A blinde sacrifice and Priest are abominable to God : the ignorant worships hee knowes not what, he cannot worship in spirit and truth, *Ioh. 4.* the reason is giuen by the Casist ; Affection depends vpon the Vnderstanding. And if vpon that ground

Rom. 8.

Ioh. 4.

Act.

ground it beebest for a man to vnderstand himselfe in his priuate prayers, as some Iesuites thinke, why not in publike too, as *S. Paul* would haue it.

2. Faith, not in that bastard sense that some father vpon vs, who either doe not, or will not vnderstand vs in the whole doctrine of faith, but faith is requisite thus farre ; first, to beleue that our persons are accepted through Christ ; secondly, that our suits are welcome with our persons, and shall be euer rewarded, though not alwayes granted in the kinde. Thus hee that comes to God must act two acts of faith ; he must beleue first that God is, *i. is really the same* that his word reports him, most strong, good, true, constant, &c. secondly, that he is a rewarder of them that come to him, and hath not said in vaine, *Secke yee my face*; as *Esay* speaks.

Heb. II.

Esay. 45. 19.

3. Humility, whereby wee come to set a due rate vpon our selues and God, and know the right distance betwixt him and vs. This humility helps vs to see that there is nothing but emptinesse in vs, and (secondly) makes vs willing to accept of Gods gifts vpon Gods termes, namely, as free almes. The Lord is neere to euery humbled and broken spirit, *Psal. 34.* to euery abased Publican, but euery proud Pharisee is beheld aloofe, and sent empty away.

Luk. 18.

& Luk. 1.

Thus for the vnderstanding, now for the will and affections, they must be good also, as the immediate springs of action. The goodnesse of the

affection stands in three things, first, in the straightnesse and position of it, that it bee turned the right way, and looke vpon the right object: our affections stand backward, their backs bee vpon God, their faces vpon the creatures, nay, vpon sinne. Who so will pray to purpose, must haue the bent of his heart another way, hee must say with *Dauid*, I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes, *Psal.* 101. and againe, If I regard (or looke towards) iniquity, God will not heare my prayers, *Psal.* 66. 18. All thoughts, desires and purposes of sinne, must fall, if the heart shall stand in prayer, and the whole soule and man turned to the Lord.

*Bonum sub
iis ic boni.*

2. The goodnesse of the affection stands in the quality of it, that it be sincere, that is, that we desire goodnesse for goodnesse sake, grace because it is grace, whereby we shall be enabled to glorifie God. He that hath truth in the inward parts, hath the promise on his side, *Psa.* 145. 18.

3. The third thing to be respected in the affection, is its iust quantity, which we call zeale. This in some due proportion is required in prayer: for no sacrifice is welcome to God without some fire, some warmth. Dead prayers be as distastefull to God, as dead drinckes be to vs: the prayer that is auaileable, must haue some spirit and seruour in it, *Iam.* 5. This for the matter.

2. Touching the meanes in which our prayers must be tendered; and here we must know, that the Father will be honoured in the Sonne, whom hee

he hath made the sole Mediator betwixt heauen and earth. And howsoeuer to others there be Lords and Mediators many, yet to the Church, there is but one Sonne, one Name, one Altar, one high Priest, in whose hand alone they offer vp all. If any other be deputed as Master of requests vnder him, let vs see his patent, and it suffices.

3. Touching the end of praying: first, it is not to acquaint God with any thing hidden, or to minde him of any thing forgotten, or to moue him to any mercy whereto hee is backward (as if we could preuent him, and be more desirous of the creatures good then he is;) but it is 1. principally to acknowledge our dependancy & his soueraignty, and secondarily to make way for a thanketull and holy vse of mercies receiued.

Thus for matters more essentiall to prayer; now for others more circumstantiall, a word is sufficient.

Quest. 4. First for time: 1. we are not tyed to all, to any set time in priuate prayer (of which wee speake;) first the duty is affirmatiue, therefore bindes but to the season: secondly, other duties *Not ad semper* are also required, and must haue their turne: 2. times of prayer are 1. Occasionall, which come not vnder rule. 2. Ordinary. Here 1. our Saviour presumes daily prayer, as may be gathered *Mat. 6.* 2. The statute in Israel, required, in the name of the whole Church, Morning and Euening prayer and sacrifice. 3. Eminent men (especially *Dan. 6.* in distressed times) presented themselves thrice a day.

Psal. 55.

a day before the Lord. And this is all that's said for time. As for (*Pray continually*) the Euehites might as well conclude continuall feeding at *Davids* table, as vncessant praying thence. v. 2 *Sam.* 9. 10.

2. For place : first, all places are warranted for priuate deuotions, *Ioh.* 4. 21. 1 *Tim.* 2. 8. secondly, the fittest is, that which is 1. freest from distraction, 2. farthest from suspection and appearance of hypocrisie.

3. For gesture, the rules are also two : first, all are sanctified, and in case may be vsed : secondly, that's the fittest that best 1. stirres affection, 2. expresses reuerence.

4. For order : first, we are not tyed to any set course or forme; therefore (2) a man may beginne with Confession, Thanksgiuing, Petition, as he sees cause. 2. hee may vse, or not vse a set forme for his owne particular, varying there onely where his case varies, though in publique a prescribed forme be most conuenient and agreeable to antiquity.

Thus for the Doctrinall part of Prayer. Now a word or two to some cases respecting practice.

Case 1.

And first, 'tis demanded how a man is to conceiue of God in Prayer, since the more wee thinke of his essence, we lose our selues?

Answer 1. Ther's no direct beholding of God in his infinitesse.

2. We must reflect vpon him, 1. as he is presented in Christ, 2. as he is described in the Word. See him with our eyes in his Attributes, as he is reported

ted to be strong, mercifull, gracious, and so forward, as it followes in his stile and title, *Ex. 34.*

3. Lastly, take him at the rebound in the creatures; in them there's some mercy, in him more: as Christ teacheth vs in some parables to inferre.

Quest. 2. How shal I doe to confine my thoughts, and to keepe them to the point in hand whilst I am praying?

Ans. 1. Bewaile the loosenesse of thy nature, and pray with *Dauid, O Lord vnise my heart to thee.*

2. Raine in thy thought at other, at all times: for when they haue got a course and custome of raining, they will not bee called in at an houres warning.

3. Set thy minde and thoughts vpon heauenly things, which are able to satisfie them; else like the Bee they'l flye from place to place, because earthly things doe not satisfie them.

4. Giue God the heart, and the will commands the thoughts. Men in loue cannot put off the thoughts of their friend, though they would. Loue more, and thou wilt thinke better.

Quest. 3. But how if I cannot come to God in faith, as to a father? the prayer of vnbeleefe is abominable.

Ans. 1. There's often faith when ther's little or no feeling: Faith may worke directly, though without reflex from Christ to thee.

2. Vnbeleefe is eyther opposed, felt, bewailed, or not: vnbeleefe bewailed and resisted shall neuer hurt vs, and may concurre with faith in the

same subiect, as *Mark. 9. 24.*

Lastly, *S. James cap. 1. 6.* speakes not of a partiall and particular vnbeleefe in the subiect, but of an vniuersall and totall infidelity in respect of the obiect.

Quest. 4. But what if my heart be full of wrath, and swell against my brother when I should pray?

Ans. 1. Lay downe all thoughts of reuenge, if wronged.

2. Take vp a resolution of peaceablenesse and satisfaction, if thou shalt be found faulty.

3. Pray for the party; and when thou canst finde reasons why God should loue him, thou wilt see cause why thou shouldst pittie him. Prayer will calme and sweeten the affections: There's no danger of a bloudy *Saul*; if once he fall to praying, as God tels one, *Act. 9.*

Quest. 5. But what if a man be so dumb and barren, that hee can say nothing when hee should pray?

Ans. 1. Let him enquire into the cause hereof: Sometimes dumbnesse comes from the abundant pressuures and amazements of the soule, when that (being ouerwhelmed, as *Dauid* often speakes, *Psal. 142. 143.*) can finde no vent; In this case if a man doe but reiterate the same petition with our blessed Sauour, or doe but chatter with *Hezekiah*, nay, suppose hee cannot speake at all, as *Psal. 77.* yet hee is to stay himselfe in these instances, and Gods gracious promises, who hath eyes to see petitioners, as well as eares to heare them, who

who heares our sighings and breathings, and knows the meaning of vnuttered groanes, *Rom. 8.* and will pittie speechlesse Prayers, as we doe maimed men, whose tongues are cut out.

Eye open, as
well as care.
1 Chro. 6. 40.
cum 7. 15.
V. Psal. 102. 20
Lam. 3. 56.

But if this silence and barrennesse come from coldnesse and vngraciousnesse, then he must runne another (and that's this) course : first hee must bewaile it in the cause : secondly, he must breake thorough it by a serious vse of the meanes; that is, hee must first try another way . if thou finde nothing wanting, and seest no need of God or of prayer, and therefore canst not fall to begging, yet see matter of confession and of thankes-giuing; blesse God for what thou hast receiued already, confesse thy coldnesse and present deadnesse, and so by stirring thou shalt gather some warmth : 2. if this serue not, consult some friend, fetch some quicknance thence, as Iron brightens and sharpens Iron. Thirdly, if this worke not, betake thy selfe to physicke; there's (as for the body, so) for the soule both food and physicke. In ordinary times, an ordinary dyet will preserue the soule, but in case of sicknesse (whereof lazines and listlesse is still a fore-runner) meanes more than ordinary must bee vsed : thou must pray, fast, cry in a more than wonted manner, else some great desertion or temptation is at hand.

Quest. 6. But how shall I know that my prayers are heard?

Answ. First, looke to Gods word; and if thou

hast a promise of hearing, thou art heard: and this is indeed faith. To see Gods answere in my hand, and to my sense, is feeling, not faith: to reade mine answere in the Promise, and to reioyce in that, and be thankfull for that with the Saints, without feeling, is true faith.

As Psal. 56. 10

V. 2 Chro. 20.

18.

Hab. 3. 17, 18.

2 Look to Gods workes; see how the prouidence workes vpon thy prayer: sometimes God answers thee in the very kinde, giues the thing instanced: sometimes hee answers thee with strength in thy soule, as *David* speaks; thou hast strength to waite, strength to hang on, and to come againe. Know this for thy comfort, every second prayer for grace, is an answere to the first, every third to the second, and so forward.

Psal. 138. 3.

Quest. 7. But it may be God heares me for some friends sake, whose prayers are mingled with mine, how shall I know that God hath heard me?

Answ. 1. Prayers begg'd and borrowed, are thine and consent.

2 If thou hadst a part in the worke, take thy share also in the wages and comfort.

3 Those prayers that make thee more humble, more thankfull for blessings receiued, and more carefull to glorifie God with his gifts, are thine; the answere is to thee, if the fruite and vse of the blessing receiued be to God.

Quest. 8. But sith wicked men and hypocrites haue now taken vp a course of prayer, and breeding and custome hath wrought a kinde of conscience in them of this dutie, how shall a man discern

discerne betwene the prayers of the vpright and the hypocrite?

Ans. The maine difference is to bee fetcht from their persons & projects in the duty: but that I bee not tedious, compare what *Paul* saith Christians should doe, and what experience saith they vsually doe, and the difference will soone be seene. *Eph. 6. 18.* wee finde coucht many requisites in prayer, which the truly godly obserues, the false hearted regards not.

1. *Praying* (saith the Apostle.) Here is one difference; a wicked man lusts, wishes, as the childe doth (Would I had such a thing) but he prayes not. *Eph. 6. 18. in-
Ranced.*

2. A godly man varies his petitions according to his needs and occasions; another hath but one salve for euery sore, a *Pater noster*, a *Credo*, &c.

3. The vpright holds a course in all times and changes; the hypocrite will not call vpon God at all times, *Iob 27. 10.*

4. The vpright prayes (*in the spirit*); his Petitions are the issues of his owne spirit, and of Gods spirit: the Hypocrite, as hee is destitute of this, so that is dead within him; his prayers come but from his lips, or his braines, there is no spirit in them.

5. The vpright ioynes (*watchfulnesse*) with prayer; before hand, hee watches himselfe, lest his heart should not bee in a praying case when his houre come. In prayer he obserues himselfe, lest hee flit or flag, end or begin, before hee is a-

Speeches is
now of so-
lemne prayer,
not of sudden
circulations.

warre; after prayer, he watches where his arrow lights, that so hee may finde it againe, or shoote another the same way. Not so the wicked, he leapes from cups, oathes, &c. to prayer; hee can doe two or three things at once in prayer, wash and pray, button and trusse him, &c. and pray the while, &c.

2 King. 6. 33.

6. The vpright holds out in prayer, and will not bee beaten off from God to sinfull meanes; the wicked like a false jade will trample after a pull or two, and say with him, It is in vayne to wayt vpon God any longer.

7 The vpright prayes for others (and those Saints;) the Hypocrite is for himselfe, wife, children, friends, not for Saints, at least not for all, certainly not for *Pauls* (as it followes *verse 19.*) or if, yet not that the word may grow: sinfull mens prayers vsually begin and end in themselves, at least end in naturall things and friends, as themselves are naturall, &c.

Quest. 9. But many being wonted from infancy to pray, cannot be quiet till they haue prayed; how shall I know that I pray of conscience, not of custome; because God bids mee, and not my parents onely?

Ans. 1. If thou prayest vpon inward motiues, and from principles of thine owne, because thou feelest an inward want of grace, and need of prayer, a decay of vigour, &c. When thou wast a childe, thou didst eate, because thy mother put the spoon sometimes to thy mouth when thine appetite

appetite was not great, but now thou eatest to live, and prayest to live, &c.

2. If thou iudge thy selfe for manner as well as matter. Hee that prayes but of fashion, and for others sakes, cares not, so the thing be done, how it be done; but hee that prayes for himselfe, for life, for prayer sake, and doth the worke out of conscience, is carefull not onely to pray, but to pray well, and iudges himselfe as well for his deadnesse, and sleepinesse, and distraction, &c. in prayer, as for his neglect of it altogether, &c. Thus farre wee have answered some questions. Now wee passe to some motiues vnto prayer, whether for our selues or others: And here wee will content our selues with two onely; 1. consider how needfull the practice is: 2. how hopefull the successe.

1 For the first, this we know in generall, that 1. Motiues to Prayer. in the creature nothing is to bee found but emptinesse and beggery.

2 That in Christ are hid all treasures of wisdom and comfort.

3 That wee haue none other meane of winning ought from Christ, but prayer: if we trust to power, he will outmatch vs; if to wit, hee will outreach vs: the prayer onely of faith ouercomes him.

2 For our selues in particular. Our need of prayer will appeare, if wee 1. compare our selues with our betters: good *Dauid*, great *Paul*, (that wall of the Church, as hee is called) found their owne

Chrys. de oran.
de Deum.
Not the first
part, yet Chri-
stian, of those
we know,
Brierwood.

owne and others too, few enow; and if they need-
ed prayers, doe not wee? 2. If wee consider the
state of the world as now it stands. 1 the greatest
part of the Gentiles lie in darkenesse, vnder Sa-
than, and yet our flesh, 2 Wee are debtors to the
Iewes, who are yet vnder the vaile, 3. In the
Church, our brethren abroad lie vnder great ei-
ther coldenesse or ignorance, or persecution. Last-
ly, our selues at home need prayers not a few.
For first the number of swearers, cursers, prouo-
kers farre exceed the mourners and prayers; so
farre, that for one prayer, you haue a 1000, of
oathes, sinnes, &c. 2. Our meanes and mercies
doe infinitely aggrauate our sinnes. 3. Many that
thinke they pray, send sweete and bitter out of the
same mouth, at least curse with their hands whilst
they blesse with their mouthes, 4. Our dayes of
peace haue beene many; wee are reserued to the
last place, and all the world lookes what will be-
come of vs. 5. Gods former stroakes haue not
wrought any kinde, either reformation or humi-
liation. 6. Wee haue beene long in a declension
and consumption. Lastly, and in a word, wee and
our friends abroad and at home, are encompassed
with sinnes so prouoking, with enemies so many
and so mightie, that wee must make our way tho-
row all by prayer, or else we fall. The tongue of
man cannot demonstrate how wee should long
subsist and support our selues, vnder our pressing
euils, vnlesse wee call in mercy and helpe from
heauen. The conclusion therefore is to all, that
know

know what their interest is in God, and what the power of Prayer, is to adresse themselves to this duty.

Now lest any mans faith should flagge, in regard of his owne defects, and our great pronocations, let vs take into our consideration the second motive, and bethinke our selues of some encouragements vnto prayer, whether alone or in company, but especially in ioynt prayer, where wee concur in petitions, though not in place.

These encouragements are many; I name now these following.

1. Consider what God is with whom we deale, by nature, goodnesse it selfe; and the nature of goodnesse is to communicate it selfe. This incouraged *Benhadad*, as wee haue heard, that the Kings of Israel are mercifull: If a kinde man be easily perswaded, a mercifull man soone entreated, what is kinnesse and merrey it selfe? God takes more delight in doing good, than wee can be receiuing, therefore without entreaty he doth much, much more, &c. Indeed prayer is but a part of our homage, and a meane to fit vs for receiving: it neither puts merrey into God, nor stirs merrey in him. We cannot loue our selues so well, so much as God doth. 2. As he is willing, so able to helpe, without cost, study, labour: he is able to doe more, farre more than we can speake or think; much lesse wee cannot conceiue or say what hee is able and willing to doe. *Eph. 3.*

2. Consider what our relation is to him: 1. hee

Encourage-
ments to
prayer.

is our Father: the law of man or nature doth not meereley cast vs vpon him, but hee of his owne will vndertakes vs, bids vs call him Father, depend vpon him for all necessities, and expect them from him; and will hee then faile vs? Hee that came to his brother for three loaves, came out of season, to a poore man, to his trouble, who was but his neighbour, no kinsman, yet he speeds. She that came to the Iudge, came to a Iudge, not a Father, a cruell man, scarce a man, not to a God, came against another, not meereley for her selfe, yet shee speeds; and shall not wee with a Father?

3 Consider how hee hath engaged himselfe to vs; if wee pray, he is tyed to answere: if wee hold our bargaine and seeke, hee cannot goe back, nor denie himselfe; nay hee hath vndertaken to giue his Spirit; to giue vs a Priest, Christ to teach vs to how to pay, to answere vs whilst wee pray: all this vnder his hand; and is not this a faire encouragement?

4 Consider what meanes and friends wee haue to him, euen all whom hee respects: Christ mysticall is but one body, and makes but one voyce; what one Christian warrantably aske, all (in generall) aske. All the Christians in France, Spaine, and all in all the Shires of England, meet together in one spirit before the Lord in heauen, & ioyne in the same suits: yea the Lord hath so taught them to pray, that no one member, or matter that will beare a prayer is excluded. Now if all Gods subiects, nay children ioyne in one, shall they

*Si Imperator
diceret pete
quod vis, &c.
v. Aug. in
Psal. 34.*

*Mille in tot
gentibus unus
v. Aug. in Psal.
101. part. 1.*

they not speed? especially if wee shoke to the head: 3. God hath made high and high Priest for vs: 2. said that in him hee will bee well pleased; told vs that whatsoeuer wee aske in his name wee shall haue it; he hath prayed for vs; he hath made entrance and access: *Epist. 4. 17.* 3. made vs acceptable: 4. all this is ratified by promise and oath, that by two immutable things wee should haue strong consolation in repairing to God; and shall not all this worke comfort? especially sith he euer liues to make intercession. Suppose Christ were now in person with vs at prayer, would wee doubt to speed? He euen liues, &c. and his pray-
 ers liue, and his blood liues, &c. *Heb. 7. 25.* Aut in plal. 81.

5. Consider what prayer is to God: he loues it, and loue is bountifull; 'tis his delight, 'tis incense: he so loues it, that he loues the shadow and picture of it. When beasts cry hee heares them; when children as *Ishmael*, he heares them; when sinesfull men, as *Rehoboam* (*Psal. 107.*) hee heares them: so loues it that hee begs it, *Cant. 2.* and with *Moses*, Let me alone; & *Iacob*, Let me go: so loues them that he would not haue a prayer lost or spilt. *Ier. 14.* Pray not for this people, I will not heare. God would no waste of prayer: when 'twill not take, he will shut vp the mouth, Pray not: when he saith Pray, 'twil be to purpose. Now that which is so pleasing to him, will be profitable to vs.

6. Consider former experience: did wee euer pray but wee were the better for it? did wee euer ioyne in publike prayers but wee found them sweet

cessfull. In Eightie Eight there were solemne prayers, they tooke; in the time of Pestilence public prayers; they tooke; against the Parliament, when the gun-powder treason was discovered, God stirred vp diuers to pray much, 'twas successfull; in the wet harvest wee sought the Lord, the sun brake out; in the great drought men sought againe, and sped againe; in our then Noble Princes voyage, men sent their prayers after him, and fetcht him home againe. And what we say of our selues, may we not of a thousand more recorded in the Word? shew me a Nation or Church that euer ioyned, but they sped.

7 Consider what persons haue sped and beene heard heretofore, our selues and others like our selues. *Elijah* was a man subiect to like passions, &c. *Manasse* was a sinfull man before, when hee prayed he was heard. *Jonah* a passionate man, who by his owne folly and sinne had drawne troubles on himselfe, yet he prayes and is heard. *Hagar* a poore woman of no great parents, knowledge, prayes and shee is heard. And thus God is rich to all that call vpon him. *Rom. 10.*

8 Consider for what persons they haue beene heard. *Amos* prayed for a sinfull peoply, God heard him. *Elijah* for a fittull Kingdome in a wicked age, God heard him. *Moses* for a rebellious generation, God heard him. *Abraham* for Sodome, if ten righteous, &c. If one shall be heard for a thousand of rebels, may not a thousand of children be heard for one seruant?

9. Consider what prayers haue beene heard. *Jonah* scarce vtters a petition at all; but mones, yet hee is heard. *Hezekiah* chatters, *David* cannot speake, yet heard. Short prayers, confused prayers, broken &c. sighs, grones, all are currant. *Psal. 77.*

10. Consider in what cases they haue beene heard: in cases desperate, 1. for the thing, when in appearance 'twas impossible to bee holpen. So *Iob*, a man would haue thought that his estate, strength, had beene irrecoverable; when they fall to sacrificing, all is healed. So *Peter*, *Acts* 12. So *Elijah* and others seeme to found their praers vpon impossibilities, yet speede. So the armie that was thundering in the storie of the Church.

2. For time: Prayer hath holpen when helpe seemed to be past. A man would haue thought that it had beene too late for them (*Esther* 3.) to pray, when the decree was past: too late for *Hezekiah* to pray, when sentence was giuen: too late for *Daniel*, when his death was sealed, when execution was done, and hee in the Den: for *Jonah*, when swallowed: for the Children, when in the Furnace: but *nullum occurrit Regi tempus*, wee may haue accesse when we will, day or night, &c: he is tyed to no time; 'tis neuer too late to pray whilst hee saies pray. If now your hearts be prepared, he will bow his eare, *Psal*, 10. O but our sinnes hinder! Pray against them. O but we are not sure to carry particular suites! We are sure to haue them or better. A Father will not giue his

childe a stone when hee askes bread, but hee will

*God vses vs as
sicke men are
vled. v. Aug. in
P^r 144.*

giue

giue him bread if he aske a stone; so ours. Wee are sure againe, that prayer shall doe good: what good? See *Iob* 22. 27. First, thou shalt haue hearing (come when thou wilt:) this is more than Princes will or can yeeld. Secondly, thou shalt haue matter of thank-giuing, speed for well; that thou shalt blesse God for praying. Thirdly, thou shalt establisth purposes, which wil neuer else hold, as here. Fourthly, thou shalt finde comfort, strength in thy heart, as *Dauid* saith, thou shalt see Gods fauour and face in ioy, *Iob* 33. 26. Fifthly, thou shalt haue boldnesse and confidence for the future. Sixtly, thou shalt deliuer the Iland, doe thy selfe and others good; good in soule as well as body; *Iames* 5. Now then what lacke you? what would you haue? Would you haue corruptions abated? pray against them: graces encreased? pray for them: the afflicted Churches comforted? pray, &c. the King blessed in soule; gouernement, marriage, posteritie, &c. O talke lesse, pray more. And if the tooles be blunt, you are not so stript of weapons but you haue each his file at his owne house, sharpen them in priuate by priuate fastings and humiliations. You haue meanes if hearts: if you will lose all comfort for want of asking, you are accessary to your owne vndoing.

Ob. But God hath histimes of trying his people, and will deliuer them vp to troubles, persecutions, &c. If God so purpose at any time, prayer cannot hinder.

*Exercitanari-
tiam tuam.
Aug. in psal.
34.*

Sol.

Sol. Hath God such times? First, prayer is needfull that wee may bee fitted. Secondly, such times seldome come till there come first a cooling and declining. So 'twas with vs, as *Ridley* and *Bradford* complaine: So in the Primitiue Church. See what is said by *Eusebius*. l. 8, c. 1.

But I run too farre: the Conclusion shalbe this. Reader, thou seest what's to bee first knowne, secondly to be done in this errand of prayer. Thou canst not but see great need of praying, nor maist thou deny great hope of speed in case thou wilt buckle to the worke. Now if thou be a man (not a picture and a shadow) doe not trifle and tattle as shifters doe, O that wee mought haue publique fasts, publique meetings, publique reformatiōs, &c. but get thee into thy clofset, and begin thine owne reformation as soone as thou wilt, pray and fast as long as thou wilt, so long as thou saylest by Gods Compasse and Rule.

FINIS.

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